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# DEBATE

BETWEEN

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK

EDITOR OF "THE FATHERLAND"  
NEW YORK

AND

CECIL CHESTERTON

EDITOR OF "THE NEW WITNESS"  
LONDON

ON

"WHETHER THE CAUSE OF GERMANY  
OR THAT OF THE ALLIED  
POWERS IS JUST"

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CHAIRMEN

PROF. WILLIAM R. SHEPHERD OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
AND  
LOUIS H. WETMORE

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## PART ONE.

MR. WETMORE: Ladies and gentlemen: This debate has been arranged, because we are all very anxious to hear the views and opinions of the two representative gentlemen who will address you on the momentous question of "Whether the cause of Germany or that of the Allies is just." Mr. Chesterton who will open the discussion is an ardent advocate of the English side. He is the editor of the London weekly, "The New Witness," and is in a position to speak with authority, reflecting the English opinion on the subject.

Mr. Viereck represents the German side and is equally well known as a competent authority on the question which is under debate to-night. He is well known as an author and as the editor of "The Fatherland."

The speakers will each occupy half an hour expounding their views and will then have an opportunity of refuting, if possible, each other's arguments.

Professor Shepherd will now address the meeting.

PROFESSOR SHEPHERD: Ladies and gentlemen: On a very dark and stormy night, an old negro was riding through a forest trying to find his way by the flashes of lightning. Terrified by the peals of thunder, he cried out: "Oh, Lord, if it is all the same to you, let us have a little less noise and a little more light."

We who desire to bring a fair mind to the discussion of the present war certainly wish to have as much light as possible: the light of truth, the light of accuracy, the light of honesty, and not the noise of accusations, of controversy. We want to know what is true, what is just and what is reasonable. We must be able to see all around the subject of inquiry. We must get our information from all sources, and not only from one. We must consider the weight of testimony. We must be in a position to ascertain that which is true, that which is reliable, that on which we can pin our faith.

This evening we shall hear two champions, one for the larger number of allies, and one for the smaller. Of these

two sets of allies events point toward one of each as representative of the rest.

Mr. Viereck, whose name is well known to you, is an author of great repute. He is to break a lance for Germany. Mr. Chesterton, whose name comes heralded to us across the seas, is the champion of the English side. Mr. Wetmore and I are the seconds in this international joust.

In order to be perfectly fair in this matter, when the champion of the larger group of allies speaks the second for the smaller group will hold the chair, and when the champion for the latter speaks, the second for the former will hold the chair. You may be sure, therefore, that there is enough hostile attention behind each of the speakers to keep him on his guard. (*Applause.*)

MR. CHESTERTON: When I think of the considerable responsibility which I have taken upon myself in coming here to plead before an American audience the cause of my country in this, perhaps, the greatest, and certainly the most momentous, struggle in which we have ever been engaged, I recognize that I suffer from the fairly legitimate disadvantage of being a member of another nation. And yet, in coming here, I am exercising a right which, I think, is international, the right of placing before the impartial tribunal of a neutral nation the case of my country.

The subject of the debate to-night, whether the cause of Germany—or, as Mr. Shepherd says, we ought to say the Germanic allies—or the cause of the Allied powers: England, France, Russia, Belgium and Serbia is just—

(*Ironical cries of "Japan!"*)

I am glad that Japan is so popular in this assembly! (*Laughter.*) Well, the controversy is as to which cause is just, and in order to decide that it is necessary for us first of all to agree on a definition of justice, and I was not sure whether Mr. Viereck and I could come to an agreement of first principles as to the relation between men and men and between nations and nations. It is obviously not easy to come to such an agreement. This, then, was another difficulty from which, to some extent, I felt I should suffer, but which I think I have managed to overcome.

It so happened that I was looking through a very valuable

work of reference, "The World Almanac," and I found there exactly the thing I wanted. I hold in my hand a "scrap of paper." Nevertheless, it is a very valuable scrap and expresses, in immeasurably lucid words those principles of public justice and public policy, which I am quite willing to accept as the basis of this discussion. The proclamation runs as follows:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these there are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." (*Applause.*)

If Mr. Viereck will accept that as the basis of the discussion I will, and I am sure the audience will accept that basis because as you know, these words are taken from the Declaration of Independence. I may assume we may take that as the foundation.

I now turn to the question before us, the question of the justice of the war. As you know the very beginning of the controversy which led to this war, turned upon certain demands made by the Austrian Empire upon the Kingdom of Serbia. Those demands were consequent upon the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria in the capital of the Austrian province of Bosnia. Bosnia was a part of the Turkish Empire up to about seven years ago. It was then in flagrant defiance of treaty and public faith annexed to the Austrian Empire. That pact caused great discontent in the Bosnian province, and there was felt in Serbia a natural sympathy—for the Servians and Bosnians are mostly of the same race and religion—with the discontentedness of the Bosnian province. The Austrian Archduke was murdered in Bosnia by Bosnians—that is, Austrian subjects. That murder, of course, nobody would wish to speak of but in terms of the strongest odium and reprobation. But Austria put this forward as a cause of war. Austria had stated in a note to the army and various publications to the Allies, and the German Government has stated in a White Paper and elsewhere, that Servian official persons connected with the Servian Government were in some way concerned in that assassination. The Austrian Government says it has in its possession evidence and

proofs of that complicity. I want to ask you why that evidence is not published. If the Austrian Government has the proof in its possession, it should be published and put before the world. The German Government shows no hesitation in publishing any documents which it thinks may be useful to it. I ask for those documents.

Before that matter became acute, Sir Edward Grey made the very reasonable suggestion that these proofs should be produced, before Austria presented her ultimatum. That demand was refused. I say that, unless due evidence is produced, Austria stands merely in the position of the accuser. In that status, Austria sent the ultimatum to Serbia. Austria waited a month before doing so, and it is a notorious fact that during that month she replenished her arsenals and prepared for war. Her ultimatum was to be accepted within forty-eight hours, and certain concessions were to be made. Those concessions were on the face of them inconsistent with the existence of Serbia as an independent nation. The Servians should practically acknowledge its responsibility for a murder they repudiate all responsibility for. The Servian Government should suppress any papers which spoke in a hostile spirit of the Austrian Government, which the Servian Government, as constituted, had no power to do—no more power than your or my government. (*Applause*).

Another astounding demand could only have been meant to make it impossible for Serbia to accept it. It was that certain officers of the Servian army and government, whom Austria should subsequently name, should be dismissed from the public service. If the Austrian Government had proof of complicity of officers in the assassination, why did she not name them? What independent nation would exist for a moment, if another government thought itself entitled to tell them to dismiss this or that officer from its army? That was the demand made.

Let me suggest to you something of a parallel case. I have acknowledged that there was great sympathy in Serbia for the grievances of the inhabitants of Bosnia. In the same way there has been in this country a very great sympathy indeed with the grievances of the Irish. Now suppose that on the occurrence of the Phoenix Park murders the English Government had said without proof, on its own assertion, that Amer-

icans had been involved in the Irish plot and, on the strength of that unsupported assertion, England had asked America to put a Pro-English and Anti-Irish declaration in the public journals, to suppress all Irish patriotic societies and all Irish Nationalist papers, and to dismiss from the service of the United States certain men we would subsequently name, whom we suspected of feeling sympathy with the grievances of Ireland. What would you have said if we had asked you to accept in forty-eight hours, without remonstrance or modification, to accept every word of it? Of course, in twenty-four hours the British Ambassador would receive his passport and the American fleet would have been ready for action. Of course, there is one distinction between the two cases. Yours is a great nation and Serbia is a small nation. You may think that makes a difference. That is the German view—expressly set forward in the German White Book—that a great power must not be asked to accept public arbitrament “as if it were a little Balkan state.” You may, if you choose, say that there is a different justice for small and large powers. But if you do that, you will have to tear up this “scrap of paper,” according to which all men are created with equal rights. (*Interruptions*).

CHAIRMAN: This is a debate and not a discussion. The speaker has the right to make any remarks he chooses, and the audience has no right to answer him back.

MR. CHESTERTON: I have dealt with the first incident which incensed the original cause of the war, and have shown that in that particular it was a case of brutal, indefensible aggression of a great nation against a small. I now come to the events. Austria, as I said, demanded acceptance of the ultimatum within forty-eight hours, and Serbia, under pressure from Russia, returned a conciliatory reply, accepted a great many proposals which, I think, must have been very humiliating to Serbia, offering to alter her press laws—so as to reduce her freedom to the German standard—and a number of other concessions, but pleading for a discussion on those questions to which she could not agree, without forfeiting her place as an independent nation. If anybody suggests that Russia desired war, my answer is that it is demonstrably not the case because, if so, she would have told Serbia to throw that insolent ultimatum into Austria's face. If Mr. Viereck says Russia promoted

that war, why did Russia not advise Servia to reject all negotiations? But then came negotiations. As you probably know some of the outlines, I will not go into details. England made proposal after proposal for a peaceful settlement, that the dispute should be referred to a tribunal consisting of four nations: France, England, Germany and Italy. That was refused by the Germanic powers on the ground that Austria is a big power. That being refused, England suggested mediation. That was also refused. At last there came direct communication between Russia and Austria. Russia had made up her mind she could not allow Servia to be conquered and crushed by Austria, and I say that, if Russia had not taken up that attitude, she would have deserved the contempt of mankind. Russia was standing by the rights of a small nation, a kin to her in blood and faith. (*Laughter*). It is undeniable. (*Laughter*). She was standing out for those rights.

Negotiations began between Austria and Russia. Those negotiations had actually almost succeeded, when Germany finally declared war on France and Russia. (*Laughter*). She declared war on France and Russia before Austria. Austria did not declare war until nearly a week later. Therefore I say that it is clear that on the German Empire rests the responsibility of having forced this war, not only on the enemies, but on her deluded ally. Indeed I do not know that any nation has a better right to reproach the Prussian Government than its ally Austria, unless it be its ally Turkey.

Germany having decided on war with France and Russia, proceeded, as you know, to violate the neutrality of Belgium. Belgium is a small nation whose security and peace had been deliberately placed under the protection of the powers of Europe. Every one of the great powers in Europe had solemnly pledged itself to respect the neutrality and integrity of Belgium. Prussia—or Germany, as you call it—(*Laughter*)—it is really Prussia—(*Laughter*)—determined to violate this neutrality, promising to indemnify her for anything she should suffer. I am proud that Belgian heroism refused that offer, and said it would stand by the promises given.

Germany said to England: If you will break your promise to Belgium, so as to enable me to break my promises to Belgium, I will reward you with a whole lot of my promises. I



think that it was the amazing insolence and indecency of that proposal which probably determined England to go to war. (*Prolonged jeers and laughter*). I say at once that, in my judgment, England *ought* to have gone to war whether Belgium's neutrality was violated or not. But I say that it is quite doubtful whether we *should* have gone to war without this provocation. (*Applause.*) I need hardly trouble you with the excuses now offered. They were answered in advance. The German Chancellor himself said: "We are violating Belgian neutrality. This is a breach of international law, and for this wrong we will pay compensation. Is there anybody who believes that a German statesman would make that speech, if he held any even presumptive evidence—if he thought it possible to persuade people to believe that he held any presumptive evidence—that Belgium had in any way violated her neutrality? But it was the Prussian theory that no one cared for public morals; that the strong could do exactly what they liked. It was only whether the opinion of neutral countries, and especially of America, was outraged that these excuses were put forward—as a potent after-thought. There was no military necessity for Germany to attack Belgium. There are 200 miles between France and Germany which Germany could have attacked. The sole reason for the violation of the neutrality of Belgium was that the attack on France might be treacherous instead of being honest. France, while fortifying her German frontier had left her Belgian frontier unfortified, because she trusted to the public faith of Europe which guaranteed Belgian neutrality. Germany shamefully violated that public faith, attacked France treacherously and now has the effrontery to plead her treachery as an excuse for her violation. It is as if I were to forge Prof. Shepherd's name, and when he complained excused myself by saying that if I had not forged his name I could not have got into Mr. Viereck's office and poisoned his coffee! (*Applause.*)

I will not dwell upon the abominable treatment of the Belgians after their rights had been violated, as you are all familiar with the facts. The Prussian record in this respect is of a kind with all her dealings. Her policy of disregarding the rights of other nations is a Prussian trait which has been in evidence since Frederick the Great's time to the present day.

Frederick founded the greatness of Prussia by such a treacherous attack on Austria as Germany is now making on Belgium and France. Bismarck in his reminiscences confesses that he told his master—it was at the time when the looting of Denmark was contemplated—that all his predecessors had stolen some territory from his neighbors. No wonder that we subsequently find him forging a public document for the purpose of robbery! The German Empire is dominated by Prussia, and her policy is based on the Prussian principle of denial of justice. You may object that it is not quite fair to drag in this argument, because it is talking about the past. Mr. Viereck can hardly take that point. I am a student of his works, and I recall a poem addressed to the German Emperor in which he says, if I remember right,

*"The Star of Frederick be thy guide,  
The God of Bismarck be thy shield!"*

I do not know what sort of God Bismarck had—I presume a God who was easy-going in the matter of forgery! (*Jeers*). But we know all about the Star of Frederick. You will find it in the Book of Revelations. "And the nature of the Star was called Wormwood; and a third part of the waters became wormwood, and many died because of the waters, because they were made bitter!" (*Applause.*)

The *Chairman* then called on MR. VIERECK.

MR. VIERECK: When Mr. Chesterton challenged me to a debate on the topic of the justice of the war, I was both pleased and a little scared, because I knew that in him England would put forward her most able champion. Nevertheless I accepted his challenge because I believed that the justice of my cause would atone for the shortcomings of its spokesman. Mr. Chesterton has not disappointed us. His speech scintillates with epigram. He takes logic and tosses it up into the air like a juggler's ball. Facts appear and disappear in his arguments like rabbits out of a hat. I feel, however, that poor Mr. Chesterton labors under a serious disadvantage—the English censorship.

*"England has been left in possession of the world's ear. She may pour into it what tales she will."* Thus wrote John Mitchel, the grandfather of the present mayor of New York,



an Irish patriot, in an English jail. What was true then, is true to-day. Just as England has encircled Germany with an iron ring of foes, so she has attempted to encircle the world with an iron ring of falsehood. (*Loud applause*). The English censor not merely suppresses the truth, but he actually forges the news. I make this statement on the authority of Mr. Herbert Corey, the correspondent of the pro-ally New York *Globe*. Mr. Corey says: "*Some of the censors seem to have felt from time to time that America was not being properly informed as to the conduct of the war. So they have not only struck words out of dispatches, but have stuck words in.*" (*Applause*).

Even to this day the English have not been officially informed of the sinking of the "Audacious." Who knows how many English dreadnoughts are slumbering at the bottom of the sea, where they dread naught, neither are they dreaded? The English policy of mystification has gone so far that Sir Edward Grey openly lied not only to the world, but to his own parliament and to the British people when he stated that there was no compact, formal or informal, of whatsoever nature, obligating England to come to the defense of France. So shocked were his colleagues in the Cabinet that two of its members, John Burns, the leader of the Labor Party, and Lord Morley, resigned rather than be participants in this fraud.

A wave of hysteria has seized the English because they do not know the truth, because their minds have been poisoned. In some places the German wireless has smashed the iron ring of falsehood, just as German submarines have smashed English dreadnoughts. In England the ring still holds tight. England has always been able to hypnotize herself into the belief that her cause was righteous. England, no doubt, honestly feels that Germany and Austria are actually waging a war of aggression. In this country this question has been threshed out so frequently that it hardly seems worth while to cover the ground again. There are people in England who know the truth. They are the people who know Germany and the Germans, and who can read Germany's diplomatic documents in the language in which they were issued. I would like to ask Mr. Chesterton: Have you ever read a book in the original German language? Have you ever been in Germany? Or are

you in the position of your colleague, H. G. Wells who, when asked by Mr. Frank Harris: "What do you know about Germany and the Germans?" replied: "*Oh! you know, my son has a German tutor.*"

Bernard Shaw, who has a touch of German idealism, is one of the few men in England who still dare to state the truth. He has stripped the mask from the face of the British Lion in his analysis of the French Yellow Book. His view is one which, I think, will be accepted by history. He tells us how the British Lion was prepared to pounce upon Germany ever since he realized that here was a new world power. The British Lion, he tells us, has made up his mind that no power shall be greater on land than England, nor as great on sea. When he heard the strains of "*Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles,*" his mind was made up.

The British Lion is a cautious animal. He does not like to fight his own battles. Germany will fight to the last German. England, it has been said, will fight to the last Frenchman. She has already fought to the last Belgian. England knew that Germany would not accept a challenge from France and Russia in spite of their repeated insults, unless she was sure of British neutrality. Hence the lie of Sir Edward Grey. Hence England's pretended friendship for Germany. Germany believed that England would at least remain neutral in a war. So when Russia reached for her hip-pocket, Germany struck back in self-defense. She delivered her ultimatum, and then the English Lion, with one mighty roar, sprang upon Germany.

This is the outstanding fact. Germany declared war, but she did so in self-defence, even if England hypocritically convinces herself that it was a war of aggression. Germany wages war in self-defense and in obedience to her plighted word to her ally and comrade-in-arms, Austria-Hungary. The German Empire has never been accused of breaking her word. Germany has never broken a treaty unless that treaty was indeed a mere scrap of paper. And even then she did not tear it up until she was forced to do so by others.

The German Chancellor said that Germany was doing wrong by breaking an international law. This proves that Mr. Beth-

mann-Hollweg, at least, is not a Nietzschean. He places neither himself nor his country beyond good and evil. The German Chancellor has a sensitive conscience—too sensitive, I fear.

The German Chancellor also said that he knew England and France were prepared to invade Belgium, if Germany did not. Mr. Chesterton has chosen not to dwell upon this portion of the Chancellor's speech. Subsequent discoveries have fully verified the Chancellor's opinion. You, yourself, Mr. Chesterton, have often dwelled upon the excellence of the German intelligence service. May we not assume that if the Chancellor said that France and England were prepared to invade Belgium that he did so on unimpeachable evidence? (*Applause.*)

Documents recently found prove that the mobilization plan of France included both Belgium and Holland. I have myself published the maps of the French General Staff, and if you want to see them come to my office and I will show them to you. England threatened to invade Belgium even against the will of Belgium in case of a European war. In a conversation between General Jungbluth and Colonel Bridges, the former protested that for any invasion of Belgium by the English the permission of Belgium would be necessary. The curt reply of Colonel Bridges was that the English knew it, but that, as Belgium was not strong enough to protect herself, England would land troops anyway.

Now let us consider more fully the case of Belgium. If ever a breach of treaty was justified, it was this one. Not only were the French and English prepared to invade Belgium: the Belgian Government conspired with France against England and Germany. Belgium, although a neutral state, had betrayed all her military secrets to England and France; therefore, Belgium had violated her own neutrality. Germany was justified in her invasion of Belgium, in accordance with "the well recognized principle of the right and supreme duty to protect national safety." For these words we are indebted to the English Embassy, which issued them in explanation of the seizure by England of two Turkish warships in process of construction in English harbors.

Our Thomas Jefferson and your John Stuart Mill both agree that a nation under certain circumstances has the right to

break a treaty. It is immoral for a nation, as well as for an individual, to keep a treaty that endangers its entire existence. The treaty with Belgium, if it had been kept, would have amounted to a suicide pact on the part of Germany. (*Loud applause*).

Let me give you another quotation, taken not from the World Almanac, but from the records of the Supreme Court of the United States. Perhaps you do not think much of the Supreme Court of the United States, for you have assured us only a few minutes ago that the only difference between the United States of America and Servia is one of size. (*Laughter*). In Vol. 130, p. 601 of the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, you will find the statement: "*Circumstances may arise which will not only justify the government in disregarding treaty stipulations, but demand in the interest of the country that it should do so.*"

Justice Curtis of the Supreme Court confirms this opinion by stating that no State could be deprived of its right not to execute a treaty without surrendering its independence.

Let me also read to you a passage from a speech of the German Chancellor. I am willing to say that the case of Germany, in so far as Belgium is concerned, stands or falls with this passage:

"Germany's position must be understood. She had fulfilled her treaty obligations in the past; her action now was not wanton. Belgium was of supreme military importance in a war with France; if such a war occurred it would be one of life and death. Germany feared that if she did not occupy Belgium, France might do so. In the face of this suspicion there was only one thing to do."

This statement appears in the German White Book. (*Pause*). I beg your pardon, it does not. It is not a statement of the German Chancellor, but it emanates from the English Foreign Office. It was published in one of the early editions of the English Blue Book, but has never been republished since.

MR. CHESTERTON: "May I see the book?" Mr. Viereck turns the book over to Mr. Chesterton. (*Applause*.)

The English have suppressed this passage in all subsequent editions, and it has never been published in the American press.\*

Let me refer to another authority, one which perhaps even you will be willing to accept. My quotation is not from the *World Almanac*, not even from the Declaration of Independence, but from Deuteronomy, Chapter 11, verse 26:

“And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon, king of Heshbon, with words of peace saying: Let me pass through thy land; I will go along by the highway, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left. Thou shalt send me meat for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will pass through on my feet until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which the Lord our God giveth us. But Sihon of Heshbon would not let us pass him: for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit that he might deliver him unto thy hand, as appeareth this day. And the Lord said unto me: Behold I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee; begin to possess, that thou mayest possess his land. Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people. . . . And the Lord our God delivered him before us and we smote him and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain. Only the cattle we took for prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.”

Moses acting on very high authority took far more drastic measures than Germany when he found himself in the same predicament as Bethmann-Hollweg. In fact it must be said that, compared with the action of Moses in Heshbon, the mailed fist of the Kaiser rests gently on Belgium. The Germans are a gentle people. In fact so peace-loving are the Germans that it is necessary from time to time for men like Treitschke and Bernhardi to remind them of their own unhappy history, of how for more than two thousand years from the days of the Romans to the days of the Huns, from the days of the Huns to the Thirty Years' War, from the Thirty Years' War

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\* The Diplomatic History of the War, by M. P. Price. Charles Scribner's Sons, p. vii. Great Britain and the European Crisis.

to the Napoleonic invasions, Germany was the cockpit of nations, the Belgium of the world.

The Germans are not brutal. They are not a belligerent people. I contend that Germany is waging this war against militarism. She is waging war against the militarism of Russia, against the militarism of France and against the maritime militarism of Great Britain. It is always amusing when the pot calls the kettle black. But for an Englishman to accuse a German of militarism is to insult his intelligence. Do you or do you not know that England spends 60 per cent. more per capita on her army and navy than Germany? Do you know that France spends 38 per cent. more on her army and navy than Germany? Do you know that the peace strength of the Russian army is more than 1,290,000? Are you aware that the peace strength of France is over 700,000? Against these 2,000,000 soldiers threatening in times of peace her eastern and western border, Germany keeps an army force of only 870,000 men. If these eight or nine hundred thousand men are a match against two million, this is merely a proof of German efficiency. You are making war not against German militarism but against German efficiency.

Conscription was forced upon Prussia by Napoleon, but it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Price Collier, surely an unprejudiced witness, says: *"The German army protects Germany not only from external foes, but from internal disease. . . . It is the greatest school of hygiene in the world. Generations of Germans have been taught to take care of themselves without drawing a sword."*

German militarism is merely a part of her marvelous general efficiency. Every man in Germany is potentially a soldier, just as in Switzerland no man is permitted to vote who does not bear arms. German militarism has taught the German people the virtue of thoroughness. Applying the methods thus acquired to industry they have conquered the markets of the world. (*Applause*). Germany realizes this fact and is grateful to her army. She is grateful to every soldier. That is the reason that she honors the men who fight for her. But what shall we say of England? Mr. Chesterton, let me call your attention to an editorial in "The New Witness," in which you criticize a war order issued through the Home Office which practically



placed the defrauded wives of English soldiers under police surveillance—like prostitutes. This order was routed but, we are told, their position is still shameful. There are men at the front who have suffered, bled, risked everything for their country, whose wives have not received remittances for two, three or six weeks. “*What*”—I am now quoting literally—“*is the reason? It either lies in that stereotyped carelessness, in that contemptuous disregard for the poor, which unfortunately marks many well paid [British] officials, or in an incompetency—a crass and inconceivable incompetency that is really staggering.*” (Cheers.)

Here we get down to the roots of the war. It is a war between German efficiency and English inefficiency, between German Democracy and the Feudalism of Great Britain and Russia. Look at the lordlings and snobs who officer your armies. In Germany every man who has equipped himself mentally for the purpose may reach a commanding position in the ranks of his people’s army. The German army is the most democratic institution in the world. General von Kluck is the son of a letter carrier, and Field Marshal Hindenburg is a poor country squire.

The reason for German efficiency is due, in a measure, to her geographical position. Pitched in between two hostile nations, as Bismarck has said, she cannot afford to be lazy or idle. Compared with the Germans the English are lazy and idle, some out of choice and others because they must. General Booth tells us that one-third of the English people is constantly on the verge of starvation. England grants her citizens the right to starve. Germany grants to her citizens no such right. That is the difference between the German and the English conception of liberty.

It was Bismarck of whom you seem to think chiefly in the light of a forger, who violently opposed your inhuman Manchester School of Economics. “Let each man take care of himself and the devil take the hind-most.” It was Bismarck who said that a state may be responsible not only for the things it does, but also for the things it does not do. He further says: “A state composed very largely of Christians must be permeated by sympathy for the old and sick.” He urged Prussia to keep the sense of human dignity alive even

in her poorest workingman. Do you know, Mr. Chesterton, that Germany spends 50 per cent. more a year on social justice than she spends on her army? (*Prolonged applause*).

You speak of Prussian autocracy. Do you know that there are three republics within the confines of Prussia: Hamburg, Bremen and Luebeck? Hamburg has been a republic since the Thirteenth Century, having lost her freedom temporarily only during the reign of Napoleon. Prussia could easily have starved Hamburg, destroyed her commerce and driven her sons into exile. She could have done to Hamburg what England did to Ireland. (*Cheers*). To-day Hamburg has one of the largest ports in the world, outstripping both London and Liverpool. Dock laborers work by the week in Hamburg, by the day in Antwerp, and by the hour in London. This throws a light on the difference of conditions between Germany and England. I will not speak of Ireland. That would be a tale too pitiful to be told. England's policy toward Ireland illustrates her championship of the weaker nations. Let me read to you a passage from a recent book by Sir Roger Casement whose name, I am sure, is not unknown to you:

"The rest of the writer's task must be essayed, not with the author's pen, but with the rifles of the Irish volunteers. . . . The crippling of the British fleet will mean a joint Irish-German invasion of Ireland, and every Irishman able to join such an army of deliverance must be ready to-day."

✓ Germany will, if victorious, bring freedom to Ireland, for Germany is the country of freedom. The victory of Germany means a victory of the freedom of conscience and of religion. How are the Catholics treated in England? Compare the absolute liberty which the Catholic enjoys in Germany with the restrictions imposed upon the Church in your own country. Germany treats not only the Catholics well, but also the Jews. The last vestige of Antisemitism in Germany has been swept away by the war. You know what would happen if your Allies, the Russians, should win? A Russian victory spells pogroms in Breslau and Berlin. The first thing the Russians did in Lemberg was to institute pogroms. The commander-in-chief of the Russian army issued a statement that Francis Joseph had abdicated as Emperor of Austria and was now merely king of the Jews. Hence Russia's war was a holy war against Israel!



England until recently treated the Jews with consideration, but what changes have come over your country since the war? Let me remind you of a few things which you yourself have written. (*Turning straight to Mr. Chesterton.*) Did you or did you not say in "The New Witness" that Sir Edgar Speyer, Schuster and many others of the great Jews, who made the wealth of England, should be sent to a concentration camp and put to some useful occupation, like wood-chopping, so as to do for the first time in their lives an honest day's work? (MR. CHESTERTON: *Yes, I did.*) May I quote literally from "The New Witness":

"Unfortunately, the many virtues of the Jewish race do not include tact and delicacy in dealing with Europeans. . . . Their manner often is insolent and offensive. To give Jews the control over our honored Belgian guests, is an outrage . . . not put upon them by the will of the English people, but by the stupidity of a Jewish financier who has been allowed to worm himself into the ministry."

Did you or did you not write this because two Jewish women were placed on the Belgian Relief Committee in London? (MR. CHESTERTON: *Yes, I did.*)

(*Hisses*). You may be right or you may be wrong. I, for one, do not agree with you, but if this is your opinion, and if you are the spokesman of intellectual England, then I can understand why your country should have formed an alliance with the country of pogroms! (*Salvos of applause.*)

I now come to the conclusion, Germany is fighting for the liberty of all countries. She is fighting for the freedom of the seas. England controls every waterway in the world. Even our own Panama Canal is guarded by her Naval Station. She insists that the Panama Canal be neutralized, yet hardly had the war begun when Colonel Goethals, Governor of the Canal Zone, was forced to wire to Washington for war ships to protect the Panama Canal from English breaches of neutrality and English impertinence.

Under the guise of making war on Germany, England is making war on all neutral commerce, especially the commerce of the United States.

England claims that with her great navy she is the policeman of the seas. But if so, she is a policeman who makes

his own laws and changes them when it suits him. In the present war England has reversed every one of her traditional policies with regard to conditional contraband. If England wins, which I do not think she will, the fight will have to be fought over and over again, for no self-respecting nation can allow another to have the supreme command of the seas.

As long as the German navy exists it forms, together with the American navy, a counterweight to the naval predominance of Great Britain. In case of England's victory no nation would be able to engage in ocean traffic, except by grace of Great Britain. That is why the fight will have to be fought over again, if not with Russia then with France; if not with France then with Japan; if not with Japan then with the United States. (*Applause and hisses.*) If Germany wins, it means that all the waterways of the world will be open, free and neutral, including the English Channel.

Germany thus is fighting in self-defense. She is fighting in obedience to her plighted word. She is fighting for democracy against feudalism, for efficiency against inefficiency; she is fighting, above all, for the freedom of the seas, as against the Maritime Trust of Great Britain. Thus she is fighting the battle of all nations, even of those—with the exception of England—who are now opposing her. If Germany's cause is not just, then, where in the world is there justice? (*Prolonged applause*).

## PART TWO.

PROFESSOR SHEPHERD: After these very neutral remarks, I may be allowed perhaps to say a few words. Though a professor of history, I would not wish you to be under the impression that I know all the past. There is only one set of persons, so far as I have discovered, who appear to believe that professors pretend to know it all, and that set is connected with the newspaper form of journalism. When a professor expresses an opinion that is entirely in accord with the views of a newspaper editor he is a scientist. When he expresses\* views at variance with those of the editor, he is a professor!

Acting in this latter capacity, all I have to say is I do not think the cause of this war is identical with any one of the several occasions hitherto mentioned. If you want to search for the real cause you will have to go back many, many years. We are but just beginning to know what caused our own Civil War. The men, also, who were responsible for the evil days between 1865 and 1877 we do not praise quite so highly as we did. A long time must elapse before we can get the proper perspective. If you imagine for one moment that you can find the real cause of this war in militarism, you are mistaken. If you believe that, because a country has a lot of soldiers it will want to try them out on its neighbors, then you might just as well assume that, because this city has a large police force, it will proceed to arrest everybody in sight. The causes of this war are not to be read in White, Blue, Gray or in any other kind of colored books or papers, except black ones which have not yet been published! They do not lie in the action of diplomats and potentates. It is, therefore, a duty befitting us as citizens of a neutral country to suspend our judgment. We do not know and cannot know as much about the responsibility for the war as those nations do which are carrying it on. This fact, however, does not prevent some of us from styling ourselves the "Supreme Court of Civilization."

Why? Because we have no immediate enemies to disturb us. We can afford to philosophize, to moralize, to call one side or the other all sorts of hard names. The truth of the matter is that we are not immediately threatened, and therefore ought to be benevolent to both, and hostile to neither.

In this connection I would like to read a warning from the late Lord Roberts, which applies admirably to the state of feeling in the United States, as represented by the English press. I did not say that such was the true state of public feeling; but simply that which is represented by the English press. These are the words of Lord Roberts, one of the finest of English gentlemen and soldiers:

"May I give a word of caution to my countrymen against the unsportsmanlike practice of abusing one's enemies. Let us avoid what Kipling during the Boer War described as 'killing Krüger with your mouth . . . ' Let us keep our own hands clean and let us fight against the Germans in such a way as to earn their liking as well as their respect."

That was a noble utterance. May I ask you to preserve the same fairness of attitude toward the speakers? (*Applause*).

MR. CHESTERTON: After the very interesting and able speech of my opponent, Mr. Viereck, I feel it necessary to remind you of what this debate was supposed to be about. It is not about the Jewish problem. I have discussed that on other occasions, but I am not here for that purpose to-night. The very interesting subjects brought forward by Mr. Viereck are not the subject of this debate. It is whether Germany or the Allies have a just cause in this war, and I think not one-thirtieth of Mr. Viereck's sentences had any relation at all to this subject.

As to the question of England's interfering with American commerce, I never allow myself to say one word about it. Your government and mine are engaged in a discussion of this matter, and I am sure they will settle it in a friendly manner. But that has nothing to do with the cause of war.

Nor is the quotation of Sir Roger Casement of any importance. I should prefer the testimony of an Irish patriot who had not been taking English money for years as a British Consul.

The English censorship is supposed to prevent my learning the facts about the war. Evidently it is so, for I learned

for the first time from Mr. Viereck that all the British dread-noughts had been sunk by German submarines. I had not the faintest suspicion of that fact up to this moment. I am a little puzzled when I remember coming over on Tuesday on an English steamship and saw a lot of German ships detained in your harbors.

Mr. Viereck challenges me to say how Catholics are treated in England. I am a Catholic and so I ought to know. How are they treated in Germany? They are treated (except when they are Poles) with some measure of respect because they beat Bismarck and made him go to Canossa. But has Mr. Viereck forgotten the persecutions of the *Kulturkampf*? Anyhow this has nothing to do with who caused the present war.

I will now deal with that small part of Mr. Viereck's speech that has any reference to this subject.

I also want to say a word with reference to one question which has some relevance. Mr. Viereck told you that if Germany won the sea would be neutralized. I can only say that to anybody who has anything to do with the sea and has had some knowledge and experience of how Germany treats places that are neutralized, the promise is hardly reassuring. (*Laughter.*) Then Mr. Viereck says that Germany had never broken a treaty. It is true he added, after a pause, "unless it was really a scrap of paper." I think his conscience pricked him, for he hesitated after the "unless"—I think he was probably about to add "unless she very much wanted to do so." As a matter of fact for Prussia all treaties are scraps of paper.

There is one point which has struck me. Mr. Viereck said nothing about the Eastern aspect of the war. You will remember that I made a special and deliberate challenge to him to do so. I cannot believe that he would be guilty of anything so unfair as to keep back an argument favorable to him until I had no longer an opportunity of rebutting it, and I must therefore conclude that he has nothing to say on that subject.

In regard to the difference between small and large states, I admit, of course, there is a great deal of difference between America and Servia, but there is no difference between their rights. What I say is that they have equal rights, and I say in the face of an American audience that the United States

has not a bit more right than Servia. And if you say the opposite you are tearing up the Declaration of Independence. (*Applause.*)

When Mr. Viereck said that Germany had gone to war in obedience to her pledged word, of course he meant her pledged word to Austria. That sounds plausible, but in fact it is wrong. By the evidence of the Blue Book, Germany declared war on France and Russia on August 1st, Austria did not until August 7th. It is quite incredible that the word Germany had pledged to Austria was to the effect she would go to war with Russia while Austria remained at peace. On the contrary, the evidence shows that it was Austria who was dragged into the war on account of having pledged her word to Germany.

In regard to Belgian neutrality, Mr. Viereck is inclined to make his quotations a little stronger than they appear in print, and then reads a speech of the German Chancellor that France and England would invade Belgium, and in another connection he leads us to believe that France might invade Belgium. Any one can say "might" invade. The Chancellor had no reason to believe that France *would* invade. Mr. Viereck says that France had troops on the Belgian frontier. Of course she had! Every one knew that the German Government meditated a treacherous attack through Belgium. But those troops never crossed the frontier until England had violated Belgian neutrality. Documents are supposed to have been discovered by Germany in Belgium showing an understanding between the latter country and France and England. I assume that these documents are genuine, but that question should be raised, because Mr. Viereck said that the English censors forged. He also said something about the pot calling the kettle black! It is therefore worth recalling that Bismarck forged documents to force on the war with France, and it is legitimate to wonder whether the Belgian documents are genuine, but assuming them to be genuine, what do they amount to? Simply to this: that the Belgians suspected Germany of intending to attack them and took reasonable precautions to secure the support of the other parties to the treaty in case of such attack. If you think a man likely to burgle your house and consequently lock up your spoons, you in no way



debar yourself from calling him a thief when he does burgle you!

I do not propose to go over the question of Deuteronomy, first, because it refers to a very remote period, and second, because there is no analogy between the two cases. There is no suggestion that Moses had given any "scrap of paper" to sign!

There is something plausible in Mr. Viereck's argument about German efficiency and English inefficiency; in fact, I believe there is a great deal of truth in it. The English Government is one of the least efficient in the world and I have had occasion to point that out. I have attacked the English Government on that score. The German Government is organized for a single aim, while there are complications in the English system which do not exist in Germany. Ever since the time of Frederick the Great, Prussia has been organized for the single purpose of aggression. There are great advantages to be derived from a complete disregard of morals, and long before Frederick this fact was well-known to professors of Teutonic "Kultur" such as cardsharppers, black-mailers, people that stole silver spoons. (*Commotion.*) Well, the Crown Prince of Germany does that! (*Catcalls, hisses, loud cries of "Liar" and "Shame."*)

CHAIRMAN: The speaker has the right to make any remarks he likes, but you have no right to interrupt him in any form.

MR. CHESTERTON: The fact that you gain advantages by disregarding morals was known long before. It requires the capacity of a child to understand that. What was also known was that, if a man who happens to be strong and powerful, goes about continually disregarding the rights of his neighbors, he may prosper for a time, but ultimately he will fail, because his neighbors combine against him, and that is the whole story of this war. The conspiracy against Germany is the conspiracy of the police against the burglar. The very existence of a comity of civilized Europe is incompatible with a powerful military state acting on the Denial of Right and the Atheist system of morals which are the first principles of Prussia. (*Applause and hisses.*)

MR. VIERECK: Mr. Chesterton complains that there was

only one pertinent question raised by me, and then proceeds to reply to half a dozen. The trouble with Mr. Chesterton is that he looks merely at the superficial aspect of the war, whereas I attempt to go down to the roots of the matter. That is the difference between the English and the German temperament. (*Clapping of hands.*) I maintain that there was not one statement in my speech that was not relevant to the question and did not bear out that Germany's cause was just. I have not replied to all of Mr. Chesterton's questions. Some of these questions were answered by the audience. Some deserve no answer. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Chesterton says that I have not referred to the Far Eastern question. How many historic questions am I to solve in half an hour? The evidence against the Servian assassins has been published not in any English White Book or Blue Book, but in the Yellow Book published by France. Complete accounts of the trial of the murderers have appeared in the papers. But the sources of the war reach deep down into the centuries. The question as to who declared war is not of importance. The question as to who is responsible for the war is of the gravest importance. The spark to the powder magazine was applied by Servia, but behind Servia stands Russia. The Servians are not a civilized nation, even if the English choose to speak of them as heroic.

England changes her opinions whenever it suits her convenience. Not every one would care to be judged by a jury of Servians. Let me remind you, Mr. Chesterton, that only a few years ago England herself refused to send a Minister to the court of the cut-throats of Belgrade.

(MR. CHESTERTON: *That is right.*)

J But now that Servia serves your interests it is heroic little Servia. It is only a few years ago that we heard about Congo atrocities. It was Belgium, then, that was unspeakable in the eyes of the English. English magazines were filled with pictures of boys and men whose hands and feet had been cut off by the compatriots of King Leopold. These pictures, no doubt, give the Belgians the idea of accusing the Germans of similar atrocities. (*Applause.*) In those days no one could speak of Belgium without a sneer. But now it is "heroic little Belgium." Let us remember that Belgium is the sixth largest commer-



cial nation in the world. She had a powerful army, and behind her stood England, France and Russia. Belgium is a victim of England. Not only did the English betray Belgium into this war but they sent only a handful of soldiers to make the Belgians hold out when they should have surrendered. Even now England is starving Belgium by closing the seas to the transportation of food. England would rather starve a million Belgians than feed one German soldier. (*Applause and hisses.*)

Germany knew that France intended to invade Belgium. Every day brings new corroborative evidence to that effect. I have seen French mobilization maps in which Belgium and Holland are included. I place those at your disposal. I also place at your disposal the fac-similes of those documents in which your Col. Bridges threatened that England would invade Belgium under all circumstances in a European conflict, even against the will of the Belgian people.

I did not say that the German submarines had destroyed all English dreadnoughts. I merely said that English dreadnoughts had been destroyed by German submarines, but people who feed on padded Blue Books are apt to pay little attention to the omission of such a little thing as an adjective.

Mr. Chesterton, you cannot approve of the methods of your government. You are a rebel. You always have been against the government. You ought to be an Irishman. But if you were, you would be with me and not against me.

As an opponent of the government you naturally do not fully understand the real motives that actuated the men in control of England. Perhaps I can enlighten you on the subject. Let me read to you a passage from an essay which received a prize from the Royal United Service Institution, published in January, 1909, and written by a distinguished naval officer. Speaking for England, he says:

"We do not go to war for sentimental reasons. I doubt if ever we did. War is the outcome of commercial quarrels. It has for its aim the forcing of commercial conditions by the sword on our antagonists, conditions which we consider necessary to commercially benefit us. We give all sorts of reasons for war, but at the bottom of them all is commerce, whether the reason be the retention of a strategical position, the breaking of treaties, or what not, they come down to the bed-rock of

commerce, the simple and effective reason that commerce is the life-blood." This explains the motives of England. (*Applause.*)

You say that England has gone to war for justice. If that is so, why must you pick Germany's pockets? Why must you steal her trademarks? Why must you appropriate her patents? (*Cheers.*)

You say that I have read a statement by the German Chancellor and that I have over-emphasized the quotation. I am sorry I did not make myself clear. I did not read a quotation from the German White Book. The quotation I read was published by the English Foreign Office in one of the early editions of the English Blue Book, but was suppressed in all other editions, because it justifies the ease of Germany. (*Applause.*)

You cannot deny that Catholics are restricted with regard to public office and the celebration of their religious rites in your country. Even in Protestant Prussia there is no such restriction. If you must go back in the past and drag in "Kulturkampf," I can go back into the past and remind you of the time when England placed a prize of 20 shillings on the head of a wolf and a prize of 25 shillings on the head of a priest. (*Cheers.*)

Mr. Chesterton speaks of Prussian aggression. Who kept the peace of Europe for forty-four years? (*Applause.*) Was it England? All of Germany's wars were defensive wars. She took Schleswig-Holstein when Denmark threatened to annex that State. Schleswig-Holstein was united with Denmark merely by the personal union of its ruler. Germany made war on France and took what France had stolen. In the words of your own Thomas Carlyle, "*The cunning of Richelieu, the grandiose sword of Louis XIV, these are the only claims of France to those German countries.*"

I am surprised that you have not quoted Bernhardi. I understand that he is very popular with you. In Germany nobody heard of him until he was discovered by the English. But if you have taken our Bernhardi we have taken your Shakespeare. (*Hearty laughter and handclapping.*)

You speak of Prussian aggression. Have you ever read Boucher, the French Bernhardi, who insists that France must annex Belgium? Have you read Homer Lea, that Anglo-Saxon Bernhardi, who claims that Germany must be destroyed? May

I call your attention to the much quoted statement of the "Saturday Review":

"There is not an *Englishman in the world who would not be richer if Germany were extinguished.*"

Germany, under the Prussian régime, acquired every one ✓ of her colonies by treaty or purchase, not by treachery or by force. Every one of England's colonies was acquired by fire and sword, by loot and pillage, by force and by fraud.

You speak of the lack of morals of Frederick the Great. We in America have a different opinion of Frederick. Let me read to you a sentence by John Quincy Adams which appears in a message to Congress, published in 1826. President Adams said:

*"In the infancy of their political existence, under the influence of those principles of liberty and of right, so congenial to the cause for which we have fought and triumphed, they [the United States] were able to obtain the sanction of but one great and philosophic, although absolute sovereign in Europe for their liberal and enlightened principles." That sovereign was Frederick the Great.*

You, Mr. Chesterton, evidently have no conception of German morality or German idealism. England has not yet had a German invasion; she will. We in America know the German invasion. Twenty million Germans have invaded this country. We know that they are not barbarians, for if they are we are barbarians, too.

In the light of what I have said to-night you will perhaps understand the meaning of my poem to the Kaiser, that Prince of Peace, which so greatly puzzled both you and your distinguished brother. Inasmuch as you misquoted me, may I be permitted to conclude my remarks with this poem:

### WILHELM II, PRINCE OF PEACE

O Prince of Peace, O Lord of War,  
 Unsheathe thy blade without a stain,  
 Thy holy wrath shall scatter far  
 The bloodhounds from thy country's fane!

Into thy hand the sword is forced,  
 By traitor friend and traitor foe,  
 On foot, on sea, and winged and horsed,  
 The Prince of Darkness strikes his blow.

Crush thou the Cossack arms that reach  
 To plunge the world into the night!  
 Save Goethe's vision, Luther's speech,  
 Thou art the Keeper of the Light!

When darkness was on all the lands,  
 Who kept God's faith with courage grim?  
 Shall He uphold that country's hands,  
 Or tear its members, limb from limb?

God called the Teuton to be free,  
 Free from Great Britain's golden thrall,  
 From guillotine and anarchy,  
 From pogroms red and whips that fall.

May thy victorious armies rout  
 The yellow hordes against thee hurled,  
 The Czar whose sceptre is the knout,  
 And France, the wanton of the world!

But thy great task will not be done  
 Until thou vanquish utterly,  
 The Norman sister of the Hun,  
 England, the Serpent of the Sea.

The flame of war her tradesmen fanned  
 Shall yet consume her, fleet and field;  
 The star of Frederick guide thy hand,  
 The God of Bismarck be thy shield!

Against the fell Barbarian horde  
 Thy people stand, a living wall;  
 Now fight for God's peace with thy sword,  
 For if thou fail, a world shall fall!

*(Resounding applause, cheers.)*

PROFESSOR SHEPHERD: In bringing this meeting to a close, I feel that, although the majority seems to sympathize with the German point of view, the fact has not prevented the champions from stating their respective views with all the energy required! I am sure that everyone will go forth with sympathies less acute than before, that one and all of us have been brought nearer to the attitude of neutrality which should be ours in this mighty conflict of our brethren across the seas. (*Applause.*)













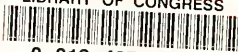


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